

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1, 5-7, 11-12 and 14-16 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 10-13 have been cancelled cancelled. New claims 16-19 have been added.

Claims 1 and 7-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner argues that the feature "said certification means" at line 14 of claim 1 lacks sufficient antecedent basis. Claim 1 recites, however, "...a certification apparatus including **certification means...**" at line 4. Thus, there is sufficient antecedent basis for the claimed feature "...said certification means..."

The Examiner also argues that the feature "the exterior thereof" at line 3 of claims 8 and 9 lacks sufficient antecedent basis. Claims 8 and 9 have been appropriately amended.

Claims 1-2 and 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being unpatentable over Honda. The rejection of claims 12-13 are moot due to the cancellation of these claims. Claim 1 is amended to include,

... said certification means is operative to certify that said master storage device is not said authorized device if said storage means has stored therein said identification information of said authorized storage device...

Applicants' exemplary embodiment includes a plurality of storage devices 21-23. The plurality of storage devices may include a master storage device 21 (i.e. a master card) and another storage device 22 and 23 (i.e. an integrated circuit card (IC Card)). Applicants' exemplary embodiment also includes a certification apparatus 30. (Fig. 1). The certification apparatus 30 certifies whether each of the storage devices is an authorized storage device. When a storage device 21-23 is certified as an authorized device, certification apparatus 30 stores an ID of the authorized device. An authorized storage device is authorized to operate components of a vehicle.

According to Applicants' exemplary embodiment, a user may attempt to certify the master storage device 21 as an authorized device. (Steps S41-S52 at Fig.

2). For example, when a storage device 21-23 is inserted into a holder, the ID of the storage device is obtained by the certification apparatus 30. The certification apparatus 30 determines if the storage device is master storage device 21 (S47). If the inserted storage device is determined to be the master storage device 21, the certification apparatus 30 determines if the ID of another storage device 22-23 has been stored (S49). That is, the certification apparatus 30 determines if another device has been certified as an authorized device. If another device has been certified as an authorized device, the process is terminated and the master storage device 21 is not certified as an authorized device (S50). Thus, "...said certification means is operative to certify that said master storage device is not said authorized device if said storage means has stored therein said identification information of said authorized storage device," as recited in claim 1.

Honda includes a master key 10 having a built in transponder 10a and a CPU 20a. The CPU 20a outputs query data X to the transponder 10a. The transponder 10a uses the function data Ft(X) to calculate response data Yt from the query data X. The CPU 20a also obtains response data Ye from the query data X transmitted to the transponder 10a and the function data Fe(X). The CPU 20a then compares the two sets of response data Yt and Ye. If Yt and Ye match, the CPU 20a makes the determination "correct transponder." (Col. 3, lines 21-45). That is, master key 10 is certified as an authorized device.

Honda does not, however, first determine if another key has been certified as an authorized device before certifying the master key 10 as an authorized device. Fig. 3 of Honda describes a process for certifying another key (new key). The master key is used to certify the new key as an authorized device. (Col. 4, line 56-57). Honda does not, however, disclose that the master key is not certified as an authorized device if the new key has been stored. Thus, Honda does not "...certify that said master storage device is not said authorized device if said storage means has stored therein said identification information of said authorized storage device," as recited in claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 2 and 14-15, while not identical to claim 1, includes features similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 1. Thus, claims 2 and 14-15 are also

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allowable over the art of record for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 1.

Claims 3-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Honda and Anzai et al. Claims 3-9 are allowable, however, because they depend from allowable claims.

Claims 10-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Honda and Funahashi. The rejection of claims 10-11 are moot due to the cancellation of these claims.

New claims 16-19 have been added. Basis for claims 16 and 19 may be found, for example, in the specification, at page 15, lines 17-28 and Figs. 1 and 2. Basis for claim 17 may be found, for example, in the specification, at page 12, lines 24-30. Basis for claim 18 may be found, for example, in the specification, at page 24, lines 20-26.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this Application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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